

The Canning of Fruit.

BY CORNELIA C. BEDFORD.

Fruits and other articles of food are put up in air-tight receptacles in order to exclude the tiny, invisible germs of mold and fermentation, which tend to cause rotting and decay. These germs are unable to endure a temperature above 160 degrees F., consequently if fruits are heated until they reach this temperature, then sealed at once to prevent further contact with germladen air they may be kept in perfect condition for an indefinite period.

We have often noticed the canned fruits displayed on store shelves and counters and have envied the skill which produced such perfect results. It is quite possible to reproduce at home many kinds of canned fruits which will not only look quite as well as the market product, but probably taste a good deal better, because they contain neither preservatives nor such substances as glucose, but are put up honestly with honest materials.

The essentials are first good fruit; that of inferior quality can be used in many cases to good advantage, but when going to the trouble of canning we usually want to have a superior article, hence the need to use first-class materials.

Next comes the necessity of first-class preserve jars. Those which have wide mouths are generally considered most practical because easily cleaned, but they must be provided with air-tight seals of some kind; this calls for tightly fitting rubber rings.

Having these two essentials it is an advantage, though not a necessity, to have some form of canner, which allows of the cooking of several jars of fruit at once. Where nothing of the sort is to be had a good substitute is a clothes boiler, the bottom fitted with loose boards or a wooden rack to keep the jars from touching the bottom.

Having the proper utensils and materials on hand it is presupposed that the jars have been thoroughly sterilized. Jars may be used year after year, but when emptied should be thoroughly cleaned before storing for future use. Then at the beginning of the canning season it is wise to again look them over, fit them with perfect rubbers, test to make sure they can be closed air-tight and sterilize thoroughly.

Having cans in proper condition look over the fruit, rejecting all imperfect or spoiled pieces. Thin skinned fruits, such as plums and gages, should be pricked with a needle to prevent bursting, while peaches are skinned by paring or scalding. Such fruits as must be pared should be dropped as quickly as each piece is prepared into water slightly acidulated with lemon juice or vinegar. Very firm fruits, such as quinces, must be softened by steaming until tender.

To ensure a minimum of work in handling, as well as to preserve the appearance of the fruit, the best way is to put it into the jars as soon as prepared and weighed.

To have canned fruit which shall not only taste, but look well, a syrup must be prepared beforehand. This differs in density and sweetness according to the fruit used. The following proportions of sugar and water for various fruits will be found good: To each quart of blackberries, huckleberries, elderberries, raspberries and blackcaps allow a half pint each of sugar and water; for sweet plums, damsons and green gages one cupful and a quarter of sugar and one cupful of water to each quart; for quinces (steamed first until tender) one pint of sugar and half pint of water to each quart; for pears and peaches one pint of sugar and one quart of water to four quarts of prepared fruit; for pineapples one pint of sugar and one half pint of water to each quart of prepared fruit.

Having measured the prepared fruit like the amount of sugar and water required, put it in a kettle and stir occasionally until dissolved, then beat to the boiling point and boil for three minutes. In the meantime fill the jars with the fruit, tapping gently that they may contain as much as possible. Next fill the jars with the syrup, pouring in slowly and gently. If possessed of a patent canner place in it the proper number of jars, cover and follow the directions which always are given with the canner. Otherwise place the jars loosely covered, on the boards in the clothes boiler, put slivers of wood between them to make sure that they do not touch one another. Fill up to the shoulders with warm water and heat gradually to the scalding point. Keep at this temperature for an hour. Open the boiler, seal the jars, replace the cover and keep at the same temperature for half an hour longer, then allow to cool gradually. Do not open until the water is quite cool, then wipe and put away.

After looking carefully over the fruit it frequently happens, especially in the case of apples, that an appreciable quantity is put aside because of bruises or from over-ripeness. Such fruit is not a dead loss, but may be converted into marmalade. Remove the imperfect part of the fruit and chop the remainder fine or mash with a wooden beetle. Weigh and to each pound allow three-quarters of a pound of sugar. Heat the fruit very slowly, add the sugar and cook gently, stirring often until the syrupy portion is quite thick and the fruit clear, then bottle and seal.

The parings of various fruits, if covered with two or three times their bulk of water, slowly stewed until soft, then set aside to ferment, will yield a good fruity vinegar. Allow the mixture to stand in large agate or stone-ware jars or pots, covering the top with cheesecloth, which will admit air, but not insects. Several weeks will be needed, but the result will be worth the modicum of time given. When transformed into vinegar, strain or filter and bottle for use.

THE WIRE TAPPERS.

Continued from Page 1.

half-lighted room. He stood in the middle of the floor, watchful, eager. Absolute silence. And then, from a moment's suspense, to the straining ears there came from a corner of the room a sound that sent the blood in a rush to their owner's heart, a sound that sent Ashland's brain back over the trail of eight long years, back to a little railroad station in the Jersey hills—"click—click—click—click, click click." It was his station signal on the old D. L. & W. road. In a flash he remembered Jim Lannagan's words of the previous evening. "Billy, you remember when we were operators together?" Now his captain was in danger and signalling.

Another moment and Ashland was on hands and knees by the side of a heating pipe that ran from cellar to roof of the house. His first impulse had been to rush down stairs, but a wiser thought restrained him. Again came the signal, this time fainter. Sound ascended. In order to his answering signal should reach the captain Ashland knew he would have to exert considerably more effort. He stepped quickly into the kitchen and seized a stove lifter. Another moment and his answering call went clanging down the pipe. A breathless silence. And then with painful tardiness the gilded tube ticked off a message charged with life and death:

"Birds flown. Phone and have Grand Central watched. Come here. Gas. Hurry!" It was a characteristic Lannagan order; duty first, life second.

Captain Lannagan, lying on his uncompromising hospital cot, put his hand to his head and rubbed it gently. It was sore and heavy, and he felt that

the bandages did not improve his appearance.

"Swelled head, Jim?" said the detective, sitting stolidly by the bedside. Lannagan smiled grimly. "It was worth it. You say you got them all?"

"Every one," said Ashland emphatically. "In the nick of time. Good play. Pretty close call for you, though."

Lannagan smiled reminiscently. "By luck they gave me the room I banked on—the one with the steam pipe. I was awfully weak when I came around, and God knows how I managed to get one hand free—I don't. Then I rolled into the corner. They had taken my gun, but I had a jimmy in my pocket. Well—you know the rest."

"Well, we've got 'em at last," said the detective finally.

Lannagan rubbed the aggressive chin. "And got them good. It means a lot. I can fix Clancey for running his pool-room. And I can square the loss of my favorite teeth. This," and he tapped his Oriental-appearing head, "means just fifteen years' hospitality up the river for my whilom hosts. Just wait till I see the 'Professor.'"

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(Chicago Record-Herald.)

A man who evidently hailed from rural parts walked into the Ellsworth building the other day and asked on what floor a certain firm was located.

"They're not in this building," said the elevator man, "but get in the car, anyhow, and I'll give you a ride."

The countryman got in and the elevator shot swiftly upward, to his immense delight.

When the car was again on the ground floor the farmer got out and reaching in his pocket, said: "That was a fine ride. How much is it?"

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150 pairs of white, gray and tan cotton blankets, handsome borders, size 62x78 inches, regular \$1.60. Sale price, pair . . . \$1.25
125 pairs gray, white and tan cotton blankets, handsome borders, Austrian finish, size 66x76 inches, regular price \$1.55. Sale price, pair . . . \$1.50
50 pairs gray cotton blankets, assorted borders, also plain sheets, size 66x78 inches, regular price \$2.20. Sale price, pair . . . \$1.75

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Size 45x36 Hemstitched Cases, each . . . 20c